

BIBLE
PRAYERS

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From Ruth
for Graduation



Bible Prayers

SELECTED BY

ELISABETH ROBINSON SCOVIL



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A Foreword

THE Bible is the great storehouse of human experience. It is a record of the joys and sorrows, the sufferings and rejoicings of the human race from very early ages.

In moments of rapture and of agony man pours forth the deepest feelings of his heart before his Maker in prayer. The prayers in the Bible appeal to us because, under such widely different circumstances, they might be the utterances of our own souls. The language is not altogether the same as ours, but the needs and the emotions that prompted the outpourings are identical.

Man still needs God and turns to Him when earthly helpers fail, as he has done from time immemorial and will continue to do as long as the world lasts.

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Bible Prayers

The Daily Prayer

WHEN our Lord Jesus Christ was on earth He was one day praying to His Father in heaven. When He ceased one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." Our Lord said, "When thou prayest enter into thy closet and when thou hast shut thy door pray to thy Father which is in secret. After this manner pray ye":

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done as in heaven so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

ST. MATTHEW VI: 9.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

GOD had saved the children of Israel from the hand of Pharaoh and had drowned the host of Egyptians who pursued them in the Red Sea.

When the Israelites saw that they were delivered they burst into a song of thanksgiving:

I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and my song, and He is become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt Him. The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is His name.

Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone.

Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy; and in the greatness of Thine excellency Thou hast

overthrown them that rose up against Thee: Thou sentest forth Thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble; and with the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.

The enemy said, "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them."

Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like unto Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed: Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation.

The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling, shall take hold upon them; all

the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of Thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till Thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, which Thou hast purchased.

Thou shalt bring them in and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever. For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea.

EXODUS XV: 1-19.

The Prayer of Dedication

JACOB had gone out from the house of his father Isaac and was on his way to Padan-aram to seek a wife from his own kin, instead of marrying one of the daughters of Heth, whom his mother disliked. God had spoken to him in a dream and said,

“Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land.” Jacob, greatly awed, built an altar and poured oil on it and offered this prayer:

If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that Thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.

GENESIS XXVIII: 20.

The Ungranted Prayer

MOSES had led the children of Israel to the very border of the promised land. They were on this side Jordan in the land of Moab. The country which they had sought during their forty years journeying in the wilderness stretched fair and pleasant before them. Moses had led them thus far, but God had decreed that he should not enter that goodly land because of his disobedience.

Moses felt that he could not bear it, so he besought the Lord, saying:

O Lord God, Thou hast begun to shew Thy servant Thy greatness, and Thy mighty hand: for what God is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to Thy works, and according to Thy might? I pray Thee, let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon.

DEUTERONOMY III: 24.

The answer was, "Get thee up unto the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan."

But God, who does exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, had better things in store for Moses than a short sojourn in the land of his desire. He was already an hundred and twenty years old and must have been burdened with many of the infirmities of age. From the mountain of Nebo, at the top of Pisgah, God took

him to Himself, to dwell in His immediate presence. Where his mortal body was laid was never told, for "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."

We do know from the New Testament that long after, when our Lord was transfigured before His three disciples, Moses appeared and talked with Him. The Gospel chronicler says "appeared in glory," a state of blessedness beyond human conception, the disappointment long forgotten, or amply recompensed.

The Prayer of Despair

AFTER Moses' death God appointed Joshua to lead the hosts of Israel. For their sins they were defeated and fled before their enemies. Joshua rent his clothes, fell on his face to the earth, put dust on his head and prayed:

Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast Thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would to God we had been

content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan. O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies? For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt Thou do unto Thy great name?

JOSHUA VII: 7.

God said, "Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned. Sanctify the people. Take away the accursed thing from among you."

No need for despair, do your part. When they had purified themselves by obedience God gave the city into their hands and they conquered their enemies.

The Prayer for a Great Gift

HANNAH was the wife of Elkanah, of the tribe of Ephraim. She was happy in her husband's love, but she had one great sorrow, she was childless. Each year when they went up to the house of the Lord and her grief overcame her he tried to comfort

her. "Hannah," he said, "why weepest thou, and why eatest thou not, and why is thy heart grieved? Am I not better to thee than ten sons?" Poor Hannah in the bitterness of her soul refused comfort. She prayed unto the Lord and said:

O Lord of hosts, if Thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of Thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget Thine handmaid, but wilt give unto Thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

I SAMUEL I: 11.

She knelt long in silent prayer. The old priest, Eli, saw her praying and said to her, "Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of Him."

In due time she had a son and called him Samuel, which means "Asked of God."

Hannah kept her promise; when the boy was very young she took him up to the Temple and left him with Eli, saying, "I

have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord." So the child ministered to the Lord before Eli, the priest. Every year his mother made him a little coat and brought it to him when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.

Hannah's home was not left desolate; she had three more sons and two daughters.

Samuel became a prophet of the Lord and ruled Israel.

The Prayer of Repentance

DAVID had committed a great sin. He not only loved another man's wife, he ordered Joab to set her husband in the front rank of the army in battle that he might be killed. When the man was dead David took Bath-sheba to be his wife.

He managed to silence his conscience, so that it does not seem even to have occurred to him that he had sinned. God sent Nathan, the prophet, to tell him of his sin in a parable. When he heard of the rich man who spared to take of his own flocks

and herds for the entertainment of the stranger who came to see him, but killed the one ewe lamb of the poor man, he was very wroth. He said, "The man that hath done this thing shall surely die." Nathan said, "Thou art the man."

David's prayer of repentance is surely the shortest on record:

I have sinned against the Lord.

II SAMUEL XII: 13.

It was enough. Nathan said, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die."

Nevertheless, since punishment always follows sin, whether we can trace the connection or not, it did not fail in this case.

The little child of David and Bath-sheba became very ill. David besought God for the child's life and fasted and lay on the ground all night. The words of his prayer have not been recorded, but they must have been those of deep repentance and self-accusation and humiliation. After seven days the child died. The elders of the house

feared to tell him of its death. But when David saw that his servants whispered together he said, "Is the child dead?" and they said, "He is dead."

Then, to their great surprise, David arose from the earth, and washed and anointed himself and changed his apparel and went to the house of the Lord and worshipped. Then they set bread before him and he did eat.

When the servants asked why he did not grieve when he lamented so sorely before the child's death, he said:

"While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

The Prayer of Gratitude

DAVID greatly desired to build a temple to the Lord, which in some measure should be worthy of His great name. God commanded Nathan to tell David that He

would give him a son who should build this house, and moreover He would establish the throne of his kingdom forever. In deep gratitude David went in and sat before the Lord and poured out his heart to Him:

Who am I, O Lord, and what is my house that Thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in Thy sight, O Lord God; but Thou hast spoken also of Thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God? And what can David say more unto Thee? For Thou, Lord God, knowest Thy servant. For Thy word's sake, and according to Thine own heart, hast Thou done all these great things, to make Thy servant know them.

Wherefore Thou art great, O Lord God: for there is none like Thee, neither is there any God beside Thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And what one nation in the earth is like Thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to Himself, and to make Him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for Thy land, before Thy people,

which Thou redeemedst to Thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods?

For Thou hast confirmed to Thyself Thy people Israel to be a people unto Thee forever: and Thou, Lord, art become their God. And now, O Lord God, the word that Thou hast spoken concerning Thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it forever and do as Thou hast said. And let Thy name be magnified forever, saying, The Lord of Hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of Thy servant David be established before Thee.

For Thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to Thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hath Thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto Thee. And now, O Lord God, Thou art that God, and Thy words be true, and Thou hast promised this goodness unto Thy servant: Therefore let it please Thee to bless the house of Thy servant, that it may continue forever before Thee: for Thou O Lord God, hast spoken it: and with Thy blessing let the house of Thy servant be blessed forever.

The Prayer for Wisdom

DAVID was dead and Solomon, the son of Bath-sheba, reigned in his father's stead. Solomon felt to the full the difficulty of succeeding such a great king as David. He knew that what he most needed was wisdom.

God appeared to him in a dream and said to him, "Ask what I shall give thee."

Solomon said, with the fervor that comes from great need:

Thou hast showed unto Thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before Thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with Thee; and Thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that Thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.

And now, O Lord my God, Thou hast made Thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And Thy servant is in the midst of Thy people which Thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

Give therefore Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this Thy so great a people?

I KINGS III: 6.

The prayer brought an immediate answer. God said to him, "Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days."

The Prayer of Consecration

SOLOMON built an exceedingly magnificent temple to the Lord. Costly woods and precious stones, gold and silver and brass were used to make it glorious. The hangings within were of scarlet and purple and fine twined linen; nothing that could make for glory and for beauty had been omitted. The priests took up the Ark of the Lord, which had been with the Israelites through all their wanderings in the wilderness, and brought it to rest in this holy place, between the spreading wings of two cherubim. The glory of the Lord filled the house and Solomon prayed:

I have surely built Thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for Thee to abide in forever. . . . Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which spake with His mouth unto David my father, and hath with His hand fulfilled it, saying, "Since the day that I brought forth My people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house that My name might be

therein; but I chose David to be over My people Israel.”

And it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel. And the Lord said unto David my father, “Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto My name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart. Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto My name.”

And the Lord hath performed His word that He spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised, and have built an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel. And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt. . . .

Lord God of Israel, there is no God like Thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, Who keepest covenant and mercy with Thy servants that walk before Thee with all their heart: Who hast kept with Thy servant David my father that Thou promisedst

him: Thou spakest also with Thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with Thy hand, as it is this day. Therefore now, Lord God of Israel, keep with Thy servant David my father that Thou promisedst him, saying, "There shall not fail thee a man in My sight to sit on the throne of Israel; so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before Me as thou hast walked before Me."

And now, O God of Israel, let Thy word, I pray Thee, be verified, which Thou spakest unto Thy servant David my father. But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded?

Yet have Thou respect unto the prayer of Thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which Thy servant prayeth before Thee today: that Thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which Thou hast said, "My name shall be there": that Thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which Thy servant shall make toward this place. And

hearken Thou to the supplication of Thy servant, and of Thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place: and when Thou hearest, forgive.

If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before Thine altar in this house: then hear Thou in heaven, and do, and judge Thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness. When Thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against Thee, and shall turn again to Thee, and confess Thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto Thee in this house: Then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of Thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which Thou gavest unto their fathers.

When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against Thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess Thy name, and turn from their sin, when Thou afflictest them: Then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of Thy servants,

and of Thy people Israel, that Thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon Thy land, which Thou hast given to Thy people for an inheritance.

If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar, if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be; what prayer and supplication so ever be made by any man, or by all Thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house: Then hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart Thou knowest (for Thou, even Thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;) that they may fear Thee all the days that they live in the land which Thou gavest unto our fathers.

Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of Thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for Thy name's sake; (for they shall hear of Thy great name, and of Thy strong hand, and of Thy stretched-out arm:) when he shall come and pray toward this

house; hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for: that all people of the earth may know Thy name, to fear Thee, as do Thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by Thy name.

If Thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever Thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the Lord toward the city which Thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for Thy name: Then hear Thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause. If they sin against Thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and Thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near; yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto Thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, "We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness"; and so return unto Thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the

land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto Thee toward their land, which Thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which Thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for Thy name: Then hear Thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven Thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, and forgive Thy people that have sinned against Thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against Thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them: For they be Thy people, and Thine inheritance, which Thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron: That Thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of Thy servant, and unto the supplication of Thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto Thee. For Thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be Thine inheritance, as Thou spakest by the hand of Moses Thy servant, when Thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God.

God accepted the offering of Solomon and hallowed the house with His presence, promising to continue to dwell there as long as the children of Israel kept His commandments and obeyed Him.

The Prayer for a Life

THERE was a great famine in the land of Israel, because for long there had been no rain. God had sent the prophet Elijah to Zarephath. When he reached there he saw a widow gathering sticks to cook her scanty meal. He asked her to bring him a little water and a morsel of bread. She said she had but a handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse, not enough for herself and her son. However, when the prophet told her God had promised that the barrel of meal should not waste, nor the cruse of oil fail, until the day the Lord should send rain on the earth, she shared them with him.

Not long after her son fell sick and died. She was in deep distress and said Elijah had come to slay her son.

He took the boy and carried him to the loft where he stayed and laid him upon his own bed and prayed:

O Lord my God, hast Thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?

O Lord my God, I pray Thee, let this child's soul come into him again.

I KINGS XVII: 20.

He stretched himself upon the child three times. The Lord heard the voice of Elijah and the soul of the child came into him again and he revived. Elijah took the child and brought him down out of the chamber into the house and delivered him unto his mother, saying, "See, thy son liveth."

The Prayer of the Testing

MANY of the people of Israel had turned away from following God, and worshipped Baal. It grieved Elijah and he said to them, "If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him."

He proposed that the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal should build an altar to their false god and place a bullock cut in pieces on the wood and put no fire under it. He would build an altar to the Lord and do the same. Then each should call on the name of his God and the God that answered by fire should be acknowledged to be the true God.

The priests of Baal prepared their sacrifice and called on the name of their god from morning until noon, but there was no voice, nor any that answered. Then Elijah mocked them and said, "Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he is sleeping and must be awaked." They persevered until the time of the evening sacrifice, but there was no voice, nor any that regarded.

Then Elijah called the priests of Baal and the people to come near. He took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes of Israel, and built an altar. Round the altar he dug a deep trench. He laid the wood on

the altar and placed the flesh of the bullock on it. Then he said to the people, "Fill four barrels with water and pour it on the wood and on the sacrifice." "Do it the second time," he said, "and the third time"; the water filled the trench. Then Elijah prayed:

Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art the Lord God and that Thou hast turned their heart back again.

I KINGS XVIII: 36.

The fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. When all the people saw it they fell on their faces and said, "The Lord, He is the God; the Lord, He is the God."

The Prayer for Vision

ELISHA, the prophet, had warned the king of Israel against the coming of the king of Syria to destroy him and his army. The king of Israel had saved himself, "not once, or twice," but many times. Therefore, the king of Syria was full of rage against Elisha and determined to kill him. He sent horses and chariots and a great host to surround Dothan, where Elisha was, to take him.

The servant of the prophet rose early in the morning, and behold a host compassed the city. Greatly disturbed he came to Elisha and said, "Alas, my master, how shall we do?" Elisha said, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." The servant could not believe this against the evidence of his senses. He saw hosts of enemies and not one friend. Then Elisha prayed:

Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes that he may see.

II KINGS VI: 17.

And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw: and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

David had said long before, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him and delivereth them."

God said to Zechariah long after, "I will encamp about Mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more."

The angel guard is still there. We need only the vision, the opened eyes, to behold it.

The Prayer for Recovery

HEZEKIAH the king was sick unto death. The prophet Isaiah, the son of Amos, came to him and said, "Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order for thou shalt die and not live."

Hezekiah was a good king; he wanted to stay longer with his people and finish his

work. When he heard Isaiah's words he turned his face to the wall and prayed:

I beseech Thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Thy sight.

II KINGS XX: 3.

He did not need many words; he wept bitterly. Isaiah had gone only as far as the middle court on his way out, when the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "Turn again, and tell Hezekiah, the captain of My people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears. Behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for Mine own sake, and for My servant David's sake."

Isaiah said, "Take a lump of figs and lay it on the boil and he shall recover."

The Prayer of Acknowledgment

THIS is the writing of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, when he had been sick and was recovered of his sickness:

I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years. I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent; I have cut off like a weaver my life: He will cut me off with pining sickness: from day even to night wilt Thou make an end of me. Like a crane, or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward; O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.

What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and Himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul. O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt Thou recover me, and make me to live.

Behold, for peace I had great bitterness:

but Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back. For the grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known Thy truth.

The Lord was ready to save me; therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.

ISAIAH XXXVIII: 10.

The Prayer of the Builder

THE land of Israel had been overrun by the heathen who surrounded it and the Jews were in captivity in their own country and scattered in distant lands. The walls of Jerusalem had been broken down and the gates burned with fire.

Tidings of this disaster were brought to Nehemiah, a devout Jew, who was cup-bearer to Artaxerxes, king of Babylon. When he heard the report of the men of

Judah, who had come to him, he wept and fasted and prayed before the God of Heaven.

I beseech Thee, O Lord God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love Him and observe His commandments: Let Thine ear now be attentive, and Thine eyes open, that Thou mayest hear the prayer of Thy servant, which I pray before Thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel Thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against Thee: both I and my father's house have sinned. We have dealt very corruptly against Thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which Thou commandedst Thy servant Moses.

Remember, I beseech Thee, the word that Thou commandedst Thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter thee abroad among the nations: But if ye turn unto me, and keep My commandments, and do them, though there were of you cast out into the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set My name there.

Now these are Thy servants and Thy people, whom Thou hast redeemed by Thy great power, and by Thy strong hand. O Lord, I beseech Thee, let now Thine ear be attentive to the prayer of Thy servants, who desire to fear Thy name: and prosper, I pray Thee, Thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.

NEHEMIAH I: 5.

Nehemiah sought permission from Artaxerxes to go to Judah that he might rebuild Jerusalem. This was granted and he rebuilt the wall.

The Prayer of Appeal

THE book of Job is one of the oldest, if not the most ancient, in the canon of Scripture. It records the deep searchings of a soul who from great prosperity was cast down to the depths of poverty, sickness, and despair. It is in the form of a dialogue between Job and three of his friends. They try to make him confess that his sufferings are a just punishment for his transgressions; but Job, knowing himself innocent of inten-

tional wrongdoing, will not acknowledge this. He appeals to God.

My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; show me wherefore Thou contendest with me. Is it good unto Thee that Thou shouldest oppress, that Thou shouldest despise the work of Thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?

Hast Thou eyes of flesh, or seest Thou as man seeth? Are Thy days as the days of man? Are Thy years as man's days, that Thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin? Thou knowest that I am not wicked; and there is none that can deliver out of Thine hand.

Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about; yet Thou dost destroy me. Remember, I beseech Thee, that Thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt Thou bring me into dust again? Hast Thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese? Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me

with bones and sinews. Thou hast granted me life and favor, and Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit. And these things hast Thou hid in Thine heart: I know that this is with Thee.

If I sin then Thou markest me, and Thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity. If I be wicked, woe unto me; and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. I am full of confusion; therefore see Thou mine affliction; for it increaseth. Thou huntest me as a fierce lion: and again Thou showest Thyself marvellous unto me. Thou renewest Thy witness against me, and increasest Thine indignation upon me; changes and war are against me.

Wherefore then hast Thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost and no eye had seen me! I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave. Are not my days few? Cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little, before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death,

without any order, and where the light is as darkness.

JOB X: 1.

Job did not submit too meekly to the admonitions of his friends. He even indulged in mild sarcasm when he was driven too far. "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you. But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these? Miserable comforters are ye all."

The Prayer of Surrender

GOD answered Job and showed him how great the Almighty is in power, wisdom, and goodness. His ways are past finding out, but are to be received with trust and submission. Job said:

Behold I am vile; what shall I answer Thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. I know that Thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from Thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for

me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech Thee, and I will speak: I will demand of Thee, and declare Thou unto me. I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

JOB XL: 4.

God heard the prayer of his servant and gave him double for all that he had lost.

Then came unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money and everyone an earring of gold. So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.

He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first Jemima; and the name of the second Kezia; and the name of the third Keren-happuch.

And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.

After this Job lived an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days.

The Prayer of Trust

THE book of Psalms is a book of prayers and thanksgiving. The Psalms have been sung and recited in the services of churches, both Jewish and Christian, since long before the time of the building of Solomon's temple. The Psalms have expressed the fears and hopes, the desires and longings of countless generations, and they still rise to the lips of countless thousands as the best expression of their deepest feelings in hours of depression or in moments of joy.

How long wilt Thou forget me, O Lord? forever? How long wilt Thou hide Thy face from me? How long shall I take coun-

sel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?

Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes lest I sleep the sleep of death; lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him: and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

But I have trusted in Thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in Thy salvation. I will sing unto the Lord, because He hath dealt bountifully with me.

PSALM XIII: 1.

The Prayer of Confidence

THE mountains have seemed to many a stricken soul a refuge from the dangers of the plain. In their steadfastness they seem to typify the strength of God.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

PSALM CXXI: 1.

The Prayer of Rejoicing

OUR prayers are chiefly supplications for the things that we need. It is seldom that we pour out our hearts in praise to God, or in fervent thanksgiving for our blessings. In the Psalms we have more than one song of joy.

I will praise Thee with my whole heart; before the gods will I sing praise unto Thee. I will worship toward Thy holy templé, and praise Thy name for Thy lovingkindness and for Thy truth: for Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name.

In the day when I cried Thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul. All the kings of the earth shall

praise Thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of Thy mouth. Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord: for great is the glory of the Lord. Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly: but the proud He knoweth afar off.

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, Thou wilt revive me: Thou shalt stretch forth Thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and Thy right hand shall save me. The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever: forsake not the works of Thine own hands.

PSALM CXXXVIII: 1.

The Prayer of Triumph

THE mournful prophecies of Isaiah, foretelling the evils that should come upon the people of Israel because they had disobeyed God, are broken now and then by the vision of victory and the remembrance of past love.

O Lord, Thou art my God; I will exalt Thee, I will praise Thy name; for Thou hast done wonderful things; Thy counsels of old

are faithfulness and truth. For Thou hast made of a city a heap; of a defenced city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built. Therefore shall the strong people glorify Thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear Thee.

For Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.

Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low. And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.

He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said

in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

ISAIAH XXV: 1.

The Prayer of Confession

NEBUCHADNEZZAR, king of Babylon, besieged Jerusalem and took the holy city. He ordered the master of his eunuchs to choose certain children from among the Jews, good-looking and clever, who might be taught the learning and the language of the Chaldeans and live in the king's palace. One of them, Daniel, determined that he would still keep the commandments of God and observe the customs of the Jews, though he was in a strange land. He passed through many vicissitudes, but was greatly beloved by his kingly masters. He had always before him the vision of the restoration of Jerusalem, and he made this prayer to God:

O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that

love Him, and to them that keep His commandments; we have sinned, and have committed iniquity; and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from Thy precepts and from Thy judgments: neither have we hearkened unto Thy servants the prophets, which spoke in Thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither Thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against Thee.

O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against Thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against Him; neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His laws which He set before us by his servants the prophets.

Yea, all Israel have transgressed Thy law,

even by departing, that they might not obey Thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us and the oath that is written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. And He hath confirmed His words which He spake against us, and against our judges which judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem.

As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand Thy truth. Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the Lord our God is righteous in all His works which He doeth: for we obeyed not His voice. And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought Thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten Thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

O Lord, according to all Thy righteousness, I beseech Thee, let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away from Thy city

Jerusalem, Thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant, and his supplications, and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline Thine ear, and hear; open Thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by Thy name; for we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but for Thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Thine own sake, O my God: for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name.

DANIEL IX: 4.

The Prayer of Joy

THE Jewish dispensation was drawing to an end. The Messiah, so long looked for, was about to appear. Mary, who was to be His mother, had been told that it was her son who was to redeem, not only Israel, but the whole world. She pours out the emo-

tions of her soul in that *Magnificat*, which has been a song of joy to all ages:

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name. And His mercy is on them that fear Him from generation to generation. He hath showed strength with His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He hath sent empty away. He hath holpen His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy. As He spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed forever.

ST. LUKE I: 46.

The Prayer of Fulfilment

THE Messiah had come. Our Lord Jesus Christ had been born into this world. His mother Mary and her husband

Joseph had brought Him to the temple for the rite of circumcision. There was present there an old man, Simeon, who had long waited for the coming of the Consolation of Israel. God had revealed to him that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. When the Holy Child was brought in he recognized Him as the promised Saviour. He took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:

Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

ST. LUKE II: 29.

Simeon blessed them all and said unto Mary His mother, "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

The Prayer of Pride and of Humility

THE two characters in our Lord's parable of the Pharisee and the publican have come down to our day as the symbols of pride and humility. The two men went up into the temple to pray. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself:

God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

ST. LUKE XVIII: 11.

The publican standing afar off, feeling himself unworthy to draw near the mercy-seat, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying:

God be merciful to me a sinner.

ST. LUKE XVIII: 13.

Few words, but embracing much. Jesus said, "I tell you this man went down to his

house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

The Prayer of Assurance

LAZARUS of Bethany, the friend of Jesus, was dead. His sisters, Mary and Martha, had sent for our Lord during the illness, but when He arrived Lazarus had been dead for four days and was buried. Our Lord asked to see the grave and commanded the stone to be rolled away from the mouth of the cave where he lay. When the stone had been removed Jesus lifted up his eyes and said:

Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me. And I knew that Thou hearest Me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me.

ST. JOHN XI: 41.

When He had thus spoken, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." And

he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said unto them, "Loose him and let him go."

Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on Him.

The Prayer of Intercession

JESUS had been talking to His disciples, just before His passion, and telling them to be of good cheer, for though in the world they might have tribulation, in Him they should have peace. When He had left them He prayed; the only long prayer that He is recorded to have uttered.

Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee: As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.

I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have

finished the work which Thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever Thou hast given Me are of Thee. For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me.

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine. And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name: those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the

son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

And now I come to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth.

As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.

And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one;

and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.

Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them.

ST. JOHN XVII: 1.

When Jesus had spoken these words He went forth with His disciples to the garden on the Mount of Olives, to suffering and to death.

The Prayer of Submission

OUR Lord's life on earth was almost over. He knew that the time of His betrayal and suffering was at hand, and His human nature shrank from it. He had gone

to the Mount of Olives with His disciples in deep depression of spirit. He said to them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Tarry ye here and watch with Me." Jesus withdrew from them and fell on His face and prayed:

O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.

ST. MATTHEW XXVI: 39.

The disciples meant to be faithful, but they were overcome with weariness, and slept. When Jesus returned and found them asleep, He said unto Peter, "What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?" He went away the second time and prayed:

O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.

ST. MATTHEW XXVI: 42.

He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. And He left them, and went away again, and prayed the

third time, saying the same words. And there appeared an angel unto Him from Heaven, strengthening Him.

The Prayer of Forgiveness

THE enemies of our Lord had done their worst. The cross had been set up on Calvary and the innocent Christ had been nailed to it to suffer a lingering, agonizing death. The rulers of the Jews were there to mock and deride Him, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself, if He be the Christ, the chosen of God." The soldiers also jeered at Him and offered Him vinegar to drink, saying, "If Thou be the King of the Jews, save Thyself." What was our Lord's reply to this cruel mocking? A prayer for His tormentors.

Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

ST. LUKE XXIII: 34.

A short time before the crucifixion He had said to His disciples, "Thinkest thou not that I cannot now pray to My Father and

He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" But for some mysterious reason the suffering was necessary and He submitted to it voluntarily.

The Prayer of Supplication

OUR Lord hung upon the cross. The sufferings of that awful day were nearly ended. The two thieves who hung on either side of Him had spoken to Him, the one in railing and reproach, the other in defence and entreaty. "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing amiss." Then, recognizing Jesus as the Son of God, he prayed:

Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.

ST. LUKE XXIII: 42.

The response was instantaneous. "Verily, I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

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